

FBMG Help Desk
Question of the Week

How can I help my yard during this drought?

*Multiple things than can assist,
some do's and dont's include...*



Reduce Stress, Reduce Chores

Trees, Lawns and Landscape Plants are trying to survive - reduce stress on them.

Now is the time to refrain from:

- *fertilizing - it encourages fast growth*
- *applying herbicide -it is not as effective in hot weather on weeds and can cause stress to landscape plants*
- *applying pesticides as they can damage the leaves*
- *overwatering - too much is worse than not enough*
- *abstain from major projects in the garden such as pruning, aerating, de thatching*
- *adding new plantings*



Give the plants a break from chores and treatments.

General Things That You Can Do

Proper watering and tips to reduce evaporation



Practice these tips during a drought:

- *Water plants deeply - produces stronger and deeper root system*
- *Soaker hose or drip irrigation - reduces evaporation*
- *Mulching keeps moisture in the ground longer*
- *Weeding - be vigilant to reduce competition for water*
- *Dead Head flowering plants early - conserves plant energy and water*
- *Possibly add a shade cloth*

Strengthen your plants and conserve plant energy

Water Wisely

Water is precious lets make the most of it.

Water applied at the correct time and in the right way is more beneficial to the plants.



Check water levels;

- *use a moisture meter to test soil moisture*
- *tin can or rain gauge to measure inches of water*

How to water;

- *water deeply and less frequently by using the soak and cycle method*
- *apply at the base of the plants not necessarily on the leaves - it is the roots that take up water*
- *water early in the morning*
- *use soaker or drip irrigation systems*
- *ensure irrigation system is working properly*

Lawn Tips

Changing Some of Your Lawn Care Routines

Simple steps to follow during a drought can reduce stress on your lawn

Lawn Care During Drought

- *raise your mower blade to remove no more than one-third of the grass at one time*
- *mulching instead of bagging will help keep moisture in the soil*
- *sharpen your mower blades to avoid tearing the grass*
- *keep weeds down by pulling to reduce competition for water - no pesticides during the drought*



Follow watering tips

- *follow the same watering tips discussed earlier - deep water, check sprinkler heads, etc.*
- *water early to reduce evaporation*

Tree Tips

Caring For Your Tree During a Drought

Dry summers are not only stressful on you and your pets, but your trees as well

The Screwdriver Test

Before you water, test your soil with a screwdriver. If the screwdriver doesn't go 6-8 inches into the soil, it is time to water deeply

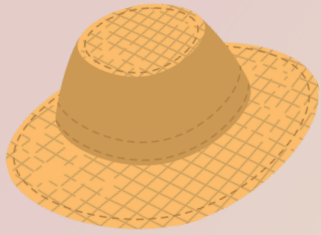


For Younger Trees

For Established Trees

- water under the canopy (ground level) out to the dripline*
- typically 2-3 inches of water per week is all that is required*
- avoid the urge to over-water - you can drown your tree*

- water at ground level*
- newly planted seedlings need between a pint and quart of water per day*
- newly planted ornamental tree needs about 2 to 3 gallons per day*
- young trees have a limited root system, water directly next to the stem and just beyond the root ball*



Take care of the Gardener

*Take care of you so you
can take care of your plants.*



Some to do's while working in the heat include:

- Garden early in the morning
- Wear a wide brimmed hat
- Light colored clothing is a plus
- Stay hydrated
- Take breaks
 - set a timer if necessary
 - find a shady spot
- Use the buddy system



Do you have questions about your home landscape and plants?

Contact the Fort Bend Master Gardener Help Desk

*Email:
FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu*

*Phone:
281-341-7068*

*The Help Desk is manned
Monday thru Friday, 9am-Noon*



[Gardening Tips During a Drought \(sdstate.edu\)](#)
[Drought: Gardening and Landscaping | SDSU Extension \(sdstate.edu\)](#)
[Lawn Care During a Drought \(sdstate.edu\)](#)
[Tree Watering Tips for Drought Conditions \(sdstate.edu\)](#)
[Tips for gardeners during a Texas heat wave - AgriLife Today \(tamu.edu\)](#)
[Maintaining Landscapes During Heat and Drought | Cooperative Extension | The University of Arizona https://wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/landscape-watering-guide/Connect | Drought and trees - Explained TFS \(tamu.edu\)](#)
[Watering Tips Information Packet.pdf \(tamu.edu\)](#)
[Earth-Kind® Drought Preparedness - Earth-Kind® Landscaping Earth-Kind® Landscaping \(tamu.edu\)](#)
[Earth-Kind® Drought Preparedness Tree and Shrub Irrigation during the Drought \(tamu.edu\)](#)
[Mulches for Water Conservation | Archives | Aggie Horticulture \(tamu.edu\)](#)
[Water Your Landscape the Right Way! \(fbmg.org\)](#)
[Water Your Landscape the Right Way! Irrigating Trees and Shrubs During Summer Drought | MU Extension \(missouri.edu\)](#)